Rhode Island Historical Society Collections

Vol. XVII January, 1924 No. 1

COURTESY OF PROVIDENCE MAGAZINE

Joseph Russell House, North Main Street

Quarters of Chevalierde Chastellux.

$3.00 per year Issued Quarterly 75 cents per copy

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RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COLLECTIONS

Vol. XVII January, 1924 No. 1

HOWARD W. PRESTON, *President* EDWARD K. ALDRICH, Jr., *Treasurer*
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Rochambeau and the French Troops in Providence in 1780-81-82

HOWARD W. PRESTON.

(Read before the Rhode Island Historical Society, March 12, 1922.)

I

The destination of the fleet which sailed from the harbor of Brest on the 15th of April, 1780, bearing the 5028 soldiers of our ally His Most Christian Majesty, Louis XVI, under the command of the Comte de Rochambeau, was a state secret. Conjecture was rife among officers and men. All knew they were to assist the Americans against the British, but where was to be the seat of war they knew not. Some thought the fleet was bound for the West Indies. Others were convinced their destination was the northern states. Blanchard, chief commis-

sary of the French army, records in his diary that he always thought that the destination was New England "inasmuch as we had embarked goods suitable for the savages and which must be given to them in intercourse we might have with them."[1]

On the 28th of May he notes that "by a change of course of the fleet, all doubts were dispelled and we saw plainly that we were going to New England."[2] Not until the 3d of June were even the colonels of the four regiments informed that their goal was Rhode Island.[3]

But long before this time, while the soldiers and sailors were still guessing at their destination, the townsmen of Providence had been warned to expect French visitors, and did not receive the news with pleasure—far from it.

The College building, old University Hall, had been used as barracks and hospital by our troops while the British army occupied Newport, but late in 1779 the Council of War voted to discontinue its use as it was needed by the college authorities. In the *Providence Gazette* of April 29, 1780, President Manning announced the reopening of Rhode Island College:

> NOTICE is hereby given, that on the 10th of May next the College in this Town will be opened, to receive the Youth who desire to prosecute their Studies under my Direction: And that a Grammar School will be opened, at the same Time and Place. The Terms of Tuition, and Boarding, may be known by applying to the Subscriber; who will pay particular Attention as well to the Morals as Instruction of those committed to his Care. JAMES MANNING.
> Providence, April 13, 1780

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[1]Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 9.

[2]Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 11.

[3]Deux-Ponts, *My Campaigns*, p. 79.

Colonel de Corny, Commissary of War in the French army, had been sent in advance of the fleet to prepare for its reception. He was to provide barracks, provisions and hospital facilities. On his arrival in America, General Washington detailed Dr. James Craick, Assistant Director-General of Hospitals, to assist him.

Dr. Craick proceeded to Providence with a letter[4] from General, Washington. Governor Greene and the Council of War on the 5th of June appointed John Innis Clark to assist the doctor in his preparations.[5] The same day the Governor notified President Manning "that the College Edifice is most convenient in every respect for the purpose" of a hospital, and requested his attendance "to give them information of the use which is now made of said Edifice."[6] Apparently President Manning was not inclined to yield his building without a struggle, for the matter went to the General Assembly, which at its meeting at South Kingstown this month voted to appropriate the College Edifice to the use of a hospital.

This action caused immediate protest from both the college authorities and the freemen of the town. The College would be deprived of its home, while the town feared the introduction of contagious diseases.[7]

A town meeting was called June 15, 1780, "to adopt legal and proper Measures to prevent the establishment of an Hospital in this Town for receiving the Sick on Board the fleet of his Most Christian Majesty daily expected to arrive in this State from Europe." It was resolved that a petition to the General Assembly be drawn by Stephen Hopkins, the Rev. James Manning and Theodore Foster. This petition probably already prepared was immediately read and adopted. It was ordered that Theodore Foster, Esq., and Colonel William Barton carry it to South Kingstown where the Assembly were in session in

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[4] *R. I. Colonial Records,* Vol. IX, p. 87, note.

[5] *Records of the Council of War,* Vol. 4, p. 112.

[6] Bronson, *History of Brown University,* p. 71.

[7] *Town Meeting Records,* Vol. 6, p. 127.

the old Court House which now houses the Kingston Library, and with the assistance of the members of the Assembly from Providence present their case to the Legislature.

On Friday, June 16, these gentlemen travelled to the South County and waited upon the General Assembly, which the next day set aside the vote appropriating the College building for the use of the French troops.

Mr. Foster reported their success to the town meeting on June 19, and both he and Colonel Barton presented bills to the town for their time, horse hire and meals.[8] Mr. Foster's bill was £119 6s.[9] Colonel Barton presented a claim for £105 14s. This at first glance seems somewhat exorbitant for two days' services, but the original bill now in the town archives bears the annotation of the Town Treasurer that exchange is 70 for 1 and also the endorsement of Colonel Barton that he has received "one pound eleven shillings and two pence silver lawful money for the within account."[10] Apparently the Town and the College had won. The General Assembly adjourned, but the end was not yet.

When the Assembly was not in session its executive powers were exercised by the Council of War, with the Governor at its head.

At the meeting of this Council, Sunday, June 25, 1780,[11] Colonel de Corny presented a request in writing stating that the College building, both on account of its situation in a town whose inhabitants are particularly attached to the good cause in which America and France are mutually engaged, and because of the salubrity of the air, had been particularly adopted, fixed and absolutely appointed by the Court of France and Doctor Franklin for the reception of the sick of the French army. He therefore requested that immediate orders may be given that the building be turned over to him without delay.[12]

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[8] *Town Meeting Records,* Vol. 6, p. 128.
[9] *Prov. Town Papers,* Vol. 5, p. 134.
[10] *Prov. Town Papers,* Vol. 5, p. 91, doc. 2095.
[11] *Records of the Council of War,* Vol. 4, p. 115.
[12] *R. I. Colonial Records,* Vol. IX, p. 119.

And there was no delay. The Council ordered the Deputy Quarter Master General to deliver the building to Colonel de Corny, and this same Sunday, while President Manning was preaching in the First Baptist Meeting House at the foot of the hill, the Frenchman took possession of his college at the top of the hill.[13] Thus was the action of the General Assembly set aside.

The French used the building from June 26, 1780, to May 27, 1782, one year and eleven months, as stated in the bill rendered for its use.

The only consideration shown by the Council to President Manning was the vote that "as the house of the Rev'd Mr. Manning is situated so near said Edifice that it may be disagreeable to him to reside therein so long as the College may be improved as an Hospital, if he should be inclined to remove the Deputy Quarter Master General is directed to provide a suitable house for him and cause the vegetables growing in the gardens of Mr. Manning to be appraised by three indifferent persons that compensation may be made for the damage done the garden."[14]

Colonel de Corny represented to the Assembly that he found great difficulty in procuring a house in Providence for himself and family, owing to the great number of inhabitants and the scarcity of houses, and the Assembly assigned him a house belonging to Major Nathaniel Greene of Woodstock, Connecticut, but now "occupied by Captain Abimeleck Riggs with a very small family who may be easily accommodated in some other house."[15] This house was on the north side of Westminster Street, east of Exchange Street and the Industrial Trust Building.

The French fleet with Rochambeau's army anchored in Newport harbor the 11th of July, 1780, and the *Providence Gazette* of July 15, 1780, announced their arrival. "Monday Night

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[13]Backus, *History of the Baptists,* ed. 1872, Vol. 2, p. 349.

[14]*Records of the Council of War,* Vol. 4, p. 115.

[15]*R. I. Colonial Records,* Vol. IX, p. 120.

last an Express arrived at Major General Heath's Head Quarters in this Town, with the pleasing Intelligence that a Fleet of His Most Christian Majesty from Brest had arrived off Point Judith. It consists of 7 Sail of the Line, 2 Frigates, and 35 Transports, having on board about 6000 fine Troops. This Armament, which is commanded by the Count de Rochambeau, and the Chevalier de Ternay, entered the Harbour off Newport on Tuesday. Wednesday Evening the Town of Newport was handsomely illuminated, Rockets were fired, and other demonstrations of Joy exhibited, on this happy and important event. On Tuesday Major-General Heath with his Suite went to Newport."

The *Providence Gazette* of July 22, 1780, states that "A Transport with 350 Troops on board and a large quantity of Military Stores which had been separated from the Fleet is safe arrived at Boston. The Troops are on their March for this Town on their way to Newport and are expected to arrive here To-day."

These were the first French troops to appear in Providence. The ship was the transport Ile-de-France, carrying a portion of the regiment of Bourbonnais. Separated in the fog from the other vessels it made the port of Boston safely.[16]

The next French troops in Providence were the sick from the fleet as shown by this advertisement in the *Providence Gazette* of August 12, 1780.

"Notice is hereby given, That a Number of Sick belonging to his Most Christian Majesty's Fleet and Army are to be sent to the College Edifice in the Town of Providence for whom will be wanted immediately a Quantity of fresh Provisions also Cider and Hay or Straw for which articles a Generous Price will be given, in Hard Money.

It is earnestly wished that a full Supply may be immediately brought in; and it is hoped that No Person will be so sordid as to demand extravagant Prices from our great and generous

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[16]Doniol, *Histoire de la participation de la France, etc.*, Vol. V, p. 19.

Allies who have come so great a Distance to our Relief. Attendance will be given to receive the articles and Payment made by the Subscriber

Benoni Pearce.

Providence August 4 1780"

On the approach of cold weather, Rochambeau arranged to quarter within the town of Newport his infantry, which had been encamped in the fields, and sought winter quarters for Lauzun's Legion of Cavalry in Providence. Accordingly, the Council of War, October 15, 1780, appropriated "The Work House to contain one hundred and twenty men, Mr. Benjamin Stelles House Fifty, his shop Eighteen, Mr. Stephen Whipple's house Fifty, Mr. Joseph Hoyles shop Twelve men . . . and the Market House Chamber as a Store for their Grain and the Spermaceti Works and Store belonging to John Jenckes Esqr and Company as a Magazine for their Forage and . . . a sufficient number of Stables for their Horses."[17]

But Rochambeau, finding that some people had "raised forage to an extravagant price,"[18] applied to Governor Trumbull of Connecticut for quarters for Lauzun, and the Connecticut legislature granted permission for quarters in the towns of Windham, Lebanon or Colchester.[19] Thereupon Rochambeau arranged to station them at Lebanon.

The Legion arrived at Providence from Newport, November 10th, and remained until the 12th, Lauzun, true to his character as a ladies' man, gave a ball on the 10th.

From time to time the French officers visited Providence, either on business or from curiosity. Rochambeau's first visit was on August 26, 1780, when he was escorted from Newport by Deputy Governor Bowen and was met at the Ferry by Generals Sullivan and Varnum. On his arrival at the Parade,[20] he

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[17] *Records of the Council of War,* Vol. 4.

[18] Stone, *Our French Allies,* p. 300.

[19] *Records of the State of Connecticut,* Vol. 3, p. 187.

[20] The open plot of ground before the old State House on North Main Street.

was greeted by the discharge of fifteen cannon from the Independent Park of Artillery placed near the bridge. He drank tea with General Varnum and lodged with Governor Bowen on Market Square. This house was torn down in 1850, but a pencil sketch by Lossing preserves its appearance for us.[21]

Rochambeau, with Admiral de Ternay, passed through Providence, September 18, 1780, on his way to his first meeting with Washington at Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth's house in Hartford, returning a few days later.

Rochambeau visited Lauzun's Legion in its winter quarters at Lebanon in December, 1780, when, according to tradition, a grand review was held. On his return, he lodged at Providence, where Commissary Blanchard gave him an account of his work as wood cutter for the army.[22] On May 26, 1781, he again passed through Providence with the Marquis de Chastellux to confer with Washington at the Joseph Webb house, Weathersfield, when the Yorktown campaign was planned.

The most frequent visitor was the chief commissary, Claude Blanchard, who preferred Providence to Newport, as it seemed more lively. He was just picking up a few English words, so was obliged to converse in Latin with General Varnum, who invited him to dine at his house.

In October the cold weather necessitated a supply of wood for the French troops at Newport, and as the Island of Rhode Island had been stripped of its trees by the British soldiers, Blanchard sought a supply in the neighborhood of Providence, driving a bargain with Mr. Harris of Pawtuxet. Fifty soldiers were sent from Newport to cut the wood. The contract was for 2000 cords, and Blanchard passed most of the winter and early spring superintending the cutting and transportation of this wood. In September, 1780, he visited the hospital (University Hall), and found it in very good order with 380 sick. He climbed the steeple of the First Baptist Church, which he notes "like all of them in America is overloaded with carvings

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[21]Lossing, *Field Book of the Revolution*, Vol. 2, p. 58.

[22]Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 83.

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President Manning's House and University Hall,— Hospital for the French Troops

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Market Square, Governor Bowen's House at the left of the Market House
Headquarters of Count Rochambeau

and ornaments painted with different colors." November, 1780, was a busy month with Blanchard, who remained in Providence. He records in his diary "had much to do for Lauzuns Legion which was to proceed to Connecticut to take up its winter quarters and which passed through Providence. All these details elsewhere very easy nevertheless met with many difficulties among the Americans who dislike to lodge troops and who as I have already mentioned are slow and even mistrustful."

This same month Blanchard paid a visit with Captain Haake of Royal Deux-Ponts to Mrs. Nathanael Greene at Coventry, whom he had met at Newport and Providence. "Mrs. Greene received us very kindly. She is amiable, genteel and rather pretty. As there was no bread in her house, some was hastily made; it was of meal and water mixed together; which was then toasted at the fire; small slices of it were served up to us. It is not much for a Frenchman. As for the Americans they eat very little bread. Besides, the dinner was long; we remained to sleep there. Mrs. Greene's house is situated upon a barren piece of land; this site could have been chosen only on account of the iron-works situated in the neighborhood. There is not a single fruit-tree, not even a cabbage. Another country-house is pretty near, inhabited by two ladies, who compose all the society that Mrs. Greene has; in the evening she invited them to her house, and we danced; I was in boots and rather tired; besides the English dances are complicated, so that I acquitted myself badly. But these ladies were complaisant."[23]

This house is still standing and is now the property of the Nathanael Greene Homestead Association.

The first mention in the Providence Town Records of a movement of the French troops is on April 9, 1781, when a request from "the Quarter Master General of His Most Christian Majesty's Army now in this State" was presented to the town meeting "to appropriate the Market House in this Town to store the Baggage of the Army." Permission was granted

[23]Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 81.

"to make use of the Upper Lofts of the Market House Building as long as he shall want the same for the Use of the said Army on Condition of his laying a Tight double Floor in the Middle Loft and keeping and Leaving the Windows and that part of said Building which shall be improved by the Army in as good Repair as the same now is (saving the natural Decay) and building such a Pair of Stairs as he may think proper in such place as shall be directed."[24]

Possibly the conditions were considered too onerous, for on April 18, 1781, when the town meeting appointed a committee to provide quarters for the French officers at the expense of the town, it also granted the upper part of the Market House and such part of the lower room as can be spared for storing the baggage of the French army.[25]

The last day of May, 1781, Rochambeau wrote Governor Greene "I am quite ready to move with the French body" and asked an order "to impress all the wagons that are on Rhode Island for carrying our baggage as far as Bristol Ferry and another order to impress the wagons of farmers between Bristol Ferry and Providence to carry the same to Providence."[26] The first of the French troops to move were 50 Huzzars of the Legion of Lauzun who went on the 3d of June via Providence to join Lauzun at Lebanon, Connecticut.[27] On the 6th, the balance of Lauzun's infantry went forward. These camped to the west of the town of Providence on the ground a few days later occupied by the main body of the army.

Rochambeau's command was composed of the four regiments of Bourbonnais Royal Deux-Ponts, Soissonnais and Saintonge. Bourbonnais and Royal Deux-Ponts formed the brigade of Bourbonnais and Soissonnais and Saintonge the brigade of Soissonnais.

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[24] *Town Meeting Records,* Vol. 6, p. 136.

[25] *Town Meeting Records,* Vol. 6, p. 138.

[26] *R. I. Colonial Records,* Vol. IX, p. 433.

[27] Von Closen, Vol. 1, p. 211.

"On the 10th of June at five o'clock in the morning," says Count de Deux-Ponts, "the brigade of Bourbonnais embarked upon the little boats that were awaiting them, and only reached Providence at nine o'clock in the evening. It was impossible the same evening to lay out the camp, to pitch the tents and get the necessary straw and wood. The Baron de Viomenil got for that night from the town authorities some large empty houses where he lodged the soldiers and the next day, the 11th at six o'clock in the morning we encamped upon the height which commands Providence on the west. The brigade of Soissonnais arrived the same day and encamped on our left."[28]

Lieutenant Robertnier of the regiment of Soissonnais of the second brigade says "they put the troops in small boats which went up the river to Providence. Several of these little boats were stranded so most of the troops had to pass the night in small boats. Most of the men were without food. It was only on the following day with the tide's help that these boats could go up the river."[29]

Tradition names the old Market House, now the Chamber of Commerce on Market Square, and the Work House which stood on the west bank of the Moshassuck River just north of Smith Street, as the large empty houses occupied by the troops of the first brigade the first night.

Judge William R. Staples, the historian of Providence, writing some fifty years later, places this camp "on the plain near the burial ground of the Benevolent Congregational Society."[30] This locates the camp near the present Hayward Park and probably between Plane and Broad Streets. It was the same spot where Lauzun's men had camped a few days before. This section of the town was at this time an open plain, bounded on the east by the Pawtuxet Road and on the south by a brook and a ravine. It was not until 1785 that the Benevolent Congre-

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[28]Deux-Ponts, p. 111.

[29]*R. I. Historical Society Collections,* Vol. XVI, p. 76.

[30]Staples, *Annals of Providence,* p. 262.

gational Society bought two and a half acres of John Field for a burial place.

On the 14th, Rochambeau and his staff came by land to Providence by way of Bristol and joined the army. One of his aides, Von Closen, writes "The country between Providence and Bristol is charming. We were transported into the Garden of Eden, all the roads were bordered with locust trees now in bloom and spreading a delicious perfume, almost too strong."[31] Count de Deux-Ponts says "We shall remain eight days in camp at Providence; and this time is necessary for us to collect horses for the artillery and the ambulances, wagons to carry our baggage, oxen to drawn then and to await four hundred and fifty men for our army who have just arrived at Boston upon the convoy coming from France."[32] With these was the Abbé Robin, who in his letters complained of the discomforts of marching through southern New England in summer.

On the 16th, the Baron de Viomeril held a review of the troops preparatory to the campaign.

While in Providence, the generals and their aides and the general staff of the army were the guests of the townfolk, as appears from Town Meeting order of March 23, 1782, when all having claims on account of the French troops are ordered to present them to the Town Audit "excepting for Two Weeks at the Time when Count Rochambeaus Army passed through the town the last Year for which Time it is expected no Charges will be made or allowed."[33]

Count Rochambeau was at the house of Deputy Governor Bowen on Market Square. This was later the Manufacturers' Hotel, which was torn down in 1850 when the What Cheer building, now the Providence Washington Insurance building, was erected. Rochambeau's aides, among them the Count de Fersen, well-known as the friend of Queen Marie Antoinette and the driver of the royal carriage on the flight to Varennes,

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[31]Von Closen, Vol. 1, p. 215.

[32]Deux-Ponts, p. 112.

[33]*Town Meeting Records,* Vol. 6, p. 150.

were lodged with Nicholas Brown in the square three story brick house, later the office of the Second United States Bank, now 27-31 South Main Street. Baron de Viomenil, Colonel of the regiment of Bourbonnais, and two of his aides were at Joseph Brown's mansion, now the Providence National Bank, 78 South Main Street. The entrance was then in the second story with a long double flight of steps, up which, it is said, one of the French officers, in a moment of exhilaration, rode his horse and into the hall; when unable to force the animal back down the stairs, he was obliged to ride through the house and return down the hillside to the street. The Count de Viomenil was at Colonel Nightingale's on North Main Street, near the mouth of the present East Side tunnel. The Chevalier de Chastellux was at Joseph Russell's house on North Main street. This was later the residence of Dr. Amos Throop, then for many years the home of Hon. Zachariah Allen. When North Main Street was widened, the house was raised and a new first story of stores was built. More recently it served as the Clarendon Hotel, and is now the headquarters of the Society for Organizing Charities. The fine interior woodwork has been removed, the best of it to museums beyond New England. The aides of Chastellux were in the Benjamin Cushing house, then on North Main Street, but which was moved up the hill when the Furlong block was built. It is now 38½ North Court Street, in the rear of 38, the Bridgham house. Count Dumas and Chevalier de Lameth were at Dr. Bowen's where the Franklin House now stands, corner Market and College Street. More than fifty officers were quartered in the town, but most of the houses that sheltered them have been destroyed.[34]

Among the Rochambeau papers in the Library of Congress is the "Plan to convey the army from Providence to Kings Ferry on the left bank of the North river in 17 marching days including two stops." This document gives the detailed arrangements for the march and describes each camping place. The

[34] *Magazine of American History,* Vol. III, p. 430. Stone, *Our French Allies,* p. 321.

entire army was divided into two divisions. The first division composed of Lauzun's Legion, which had wintered at Lebanon, Connecticut, formed the left column, which was to march parallel to the right column but between it and Long Island Sound, to protect Rochambeau's main body from attack by troops from the British fleet. The four other divisions composing the right column were to march a day apart so that the camp vacated by one division on the morning would be occupied the same evening by the next division. Each division was preceded by pioneers with axes, and had its share of the field artillery, camp wagons and ambulance corps.

The first of these divisions was commanded by Count Rochambeau himself, and consisted of the regiment of Bourbonnais, the second, under the Baron de Viomenil, was the regiment of Royal Deux-Ponts, the third, under the Count de Viomenil (brother of the Baron), was the regiment of Soissonnais, and the fourth, under the Marquis de Custine, was the regiment of Saintonge. In accordance with this plan, the regiment of Bourbonnais left Providence early on June 18, 1781, to join Washington's army.

Judging from the maps in the Rochambeau Collection and the early maps of Providence, the French army, on leaving the camp ground between Broad and Plane Streets, passed through the present Stewart Street to High Street, and west along this to the junction (Hoyle Tavern), where, leaving on their right the road to Hartford, they took the road to the left, then called the Monkey Town road, now Cranston Street, and followed this to Monkeytown, now Knightsville. The army here turned to the right following the old Scituate road over Dugaway hill by the late Pippin Orchard School house, over Apple House hill and Bald hill, crossing the Pawtuxet at the village of Kent and on to Waterman's Tavern, fifteen miles, the end of the first day's march and the first camp. Waterman's Tavern is still standing in good condition near Potterville on the old Scituate road a mile or so north of the new state highway. It is now the home of Mr. Elmer A. Havens, who shows two wells of small diameter neatly stoned, that are said to have been dug by the

French troops that camped here, both on the march to Yorktown and on the return march. The instructions for the march say: "The camp is in quite a good position although in the midst of woods, having a brook in front, and behind, the tavern and the main road from Providence to Watermans much better than that by Angells tavern. The accommodations for divisional headquarters are not aboundant but more than at Angell's tavern or Whipple house." On June 19, the regiment of Royal Deux-Ponts set out for the camp at Waterman's, followed on the 20th by the regiment of Soissonnais and on the 21st by Saintonge. With the departure of this last regiment, there were left in Providence a guard for the baggage and munitions stored in the Old Market House, and the surgeons and attendants at the hospital in University Hall.

The conclusion of the matter is shown by the interesting proceedings of the Town Meeting of March 23, 1782.

"Whereas the Greatest Part of the Troops of his Most Christian Majesty who were stationed in this Town, have Removed whereby the Elegant Large and Capacious Building with many Rooms therein, handsomely finished, heretofore improved as an Hospital, at present in the Possession of the Commanding Officer of said Troops now here, is left almost Empty, and a Number of Rooms have been taken up for some of the officers of the Army from the Inhabitants at the expense of the Town, which Rooms belonging to the Inhabitants are in some Instances much wanted, and the Burden of Taxes unavoidably accruing to the Town on Account of the War are such as absolutely require the utmost Oeconomy in the Expenditure of Money collected by the Town—

It is therefore Voted and Resolved That Metcalf Bowler Esqr. and Theodore Foster, Esqr. be a committee to wait upon the Gentlemen who occupy said Rooms for which the Town pay Rent and to inform them that this meeting impressed with a high Sense of Gratitude for the most Exemplary Good Conduct, Order and Regularity Observed by the said Officers and Troops at all Times since their residence in this Town and having Experienced so much of their Candour and Generosity are

persuaded they will not be offended considering the Great Burden upon the Town in being Requested, unless they themselves contract with the Owners of the Rooms they now improve, to take Quarters in a Building so Elegant, Commodious, well finished and so beautifully situated as the Edifice aforesaid, expecially when the Finances will not admit of Rent being paid by the Town for the said Rooms for any Longer Time than till the First day of April next.

Resolved That all Persons having demands against the Town on Account of Contracts made by the Committee appointed to procure Rooms for the French Officers bring in the same to the Town Audit who are requested and Directed to take the same into Consideration and that they draw orders on the Town Treasurer for payment of the Rents duly contracted for and certified by said Committee excepting for two Weeks at the Time when Count Rochambeau's Army passed through the Town the last Year for which Time it is expected no Charges will be made or allowed.

Resolved That it be Recommended to the Committee of the Market House to cause the same to be opened the whole of Every Day excepting Sundays when it is not to be opened at all—and that the Stalls be Rented out to the best advantage.

Whereas Col. Amos Atwell exhibited to this Meeting an Accompt by him charged against the Town for Rent due him pursuant to Contracts of the Committees of the Town, for the Use of part of his House for a French Officer and his Attendants in August Last and for Quarters for Captain De La Barrolier and his Attendants 7 Months and 2 days viz from the First of September Last to the first of April next duly Certified and Examined It is voted and Resolved that the Amount thereof being Eighteen Pounds Two Shillings and Six pence Lawful Silver Money be allowed and paid to said Amos Atwell out of the Town Treasury.

Whereas Capt. William Chace exhibited a Certificate to this meeting from the Committee appointed on the 18th Day of April Last Whereby it appears that the sum of Four Pounds and Ten Shillings Silver Money is due to him for 4½ months

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Joseph Brown House, South Main Street,— Quarters of Baron de Viomenil

Nicholas Brown House, South Main Street
Quarters of Count Rochambeau's Aides

Rent for half his house occupied by Capt. Jaimaico an Officer in Count Rochambeau's Army. It is therefore Resolved that said Sum be paid to said William Chace out of the Town Treasury.

Whereas Major Elihu Robinson hath exhibited to this meeting a certificate from the same Committee that there is due to him Two Pounds and Two Shillings Lawful Silver Money for the Use of his Great Room Seven Weeks by Mr. Demas It is therefore Voted that the said sum be paid to said Elihu Robinson out of the Town Treasury.

Whereas M^{rs} Penellope Peck hath exhibited an Account by her charged against the Town for Rooms furnished Doct^{r} Ferron principal Marine Physician of the Navy of France in this Town, from Oct^{r} 4th to Nov. 8th at 6/ per week and the said Account having been duly examined and Considered It is Resolved that the Amount thereof being One Pound and Sixteen shilling Lawful Silver Money be paid to her out of the Town Treasury.

Whereas M^{r} John Larcher hath exhibited an account by him charged against the Town for Rent for Quarters for Two French Surgeons viz for Mons. Fownee from Aug. 28 to Dec. 15 1781 15 weeks and six Days and for Mons^{r} Segar from Aug. 28 to Feb. 15th being 24 weeks and 5 days at 3/ per week in the whole amounting to Six pounds and Two Shillings Lawful Silver Money and the same amount having been duly certified and examined it is Voted and Resolved that the said Sum be paid to said John Larcher out of the Town Treasury

And Whereas the said John Larcher hath exhibited one other Account duly certified for Quarters for another French Officer from April 17th to July 3^{d} 1781 11 weeks. It is Resolved that the sum of One Pound and Thirteen Shillings Lawful Silver Money the Amount of said Last Mentioned Account be also allowed and paid to said John Larcher out of the Town Treasury."[35]

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[35] *Town Meeting Records,* Vol. 6, p. 150-1.

There was however one delayed bill upon which the Town Meeting of August 5 1782 took action. .

"Whereas Mr. Levi Whipple hath exhibited to the Meeting an Account by him charged against the Town for the Rent of part of his House occupied by some of the French Troops and the said Account having bene examined and allowed by the committee appointed to examine and adjust said accounts and being now duly considered. It is Voted and Resolved That Three and Twelve Shillings, Lawful Siver Money be allowed and paid to said Levi Whipple out of the Town Treasury."[36]

II.

On the return march Rochambeau reached Hartford October 28, 1782, and on the 29th the first brigade arrived and was ferried across the Connecticut River to camp at East Hartford. On October 30 the artillery, having obtained permission to march a day ahead of the infantry, set out early for Providence. Rochambeau, ordering the army to follow, not by four divisions as on the outward march, but by two brigades a day apart, started by the upper road by way of Pomfret and Thompson for Boston, accompanied by Von Closen, who had already traversed this route.[36a] After passing the artillery, the general was met by a messenger from Admiral Vaudreuil announcing that the squadron would not be ready to sail from Boston November 15 as expected. Rochambeau, therefore, returned to East Hartford and recalled the artillery.

Meanwhile the General Assembly of Rhode Island, informed "that the French troops under the command of His Excellency the Comte de Rochambeau, are on their march, and will pass through Providence on their route, and that it is the request of the said Comte de Rochambeau that suitable quarters may be provided for the officers while they remain in Providence, and that some person may be appointed to wait on Monsieur Beville, Mareshall General de Logis, to point out to him the quarters

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[36] *Town Meeting Records,* Vol. 6, p. 158.

[36a] Von Closen, Vol. II, p. 211-12.

which may be provided," voted that the town council of Providence be requested immediately to provide the necessary quarters and that Colonel Daniel Tillinghast and Major John Whipple be requested to assist the town council and that one of these gentlemen wait on Monsieur Beville at Waterman's tavern in Coventry and inform him of the quarters prepared for the accommodation of the officers of the French army.[37]

The artillery again took up the march for Boston on November 3, followed on the 4th by the first brigade, along the route of the previous year.

Rochambeau and his staff preceded the artillery and November 8, after breakfasting at Waterman's tavern, reached Providence about noon. It was arranged that officers should take their quarters of the previous year.[38] The artillery arrived the next day and camped on the ground occupied the previous year, to the west of the town. The first brigade arrived the 10th and the second brigade the 11th and apparently camped across the road from the artillery near a wood which Rochambeau counted upon for firewood and for the construction of barracks. The owner, however, refused his consent. A suitable spot, however, was soon found with convenient wood and water and on the 13th Rochambeau moved the infantry to the well known camp ground on Camp Street, then in North Providence, the farm of Jeremiah Dexter. A diagram of this camp ground marking the traces of huts was made in 1865 by Edwin M. Stone and Henry R. Davis.[39] The artillery remained on the old camp ground until it left for Boston November 18th. Several houses in the neighborhood still standing are associated with the French officers, the Pidge tavern and the Elisha Brown brick house, both on North Main Street, and the Richard Brown brick house near the Butler Hospital. Four companies of fusiliers were stationed at Pawtuxet, where earthworks on the Neck (Fort Hill Avenue), not long since levelled, commanded the approach to Providence.

[37] *R. I. Colonial Records,* Vol. IX, p. 603.
[38] Von Closen, Vol. II, p. 219.
[39] Stone: *Our French Allies,* p. 309.

Monday evening, November 18, the Count Rochambeau gave a ball at Hacker's Hall, South Main Street. The invitation received by the Misses Angell read: "Count de Rochambeau presents his compliments to Miss Nabby and Miss Polly Angell and begs the favor of their company to a ball at Hacker's Hall Monday at 6 o'clock. If they decline this invitation they will be so good as to send an answer by the bearer Nov. 16th." The next issue of the *Providence Gazette* has the following item: "Last Monday evening a very splendid Ball was given by his Excellency Count Rochambeau to the Ladies and Gentlemen of the town."

At the November session of the General Assembly, "Thomas Hazard Esq., Mr. John Brown, William Ellery and Rouse J. Helme, Esqs.," were appointed a committee to draft an address to His Excellency Count Rochambeau, he being about to embark for France." Their work was approved and it was voted that the secretary make out a fair copy thereof, that His Excellency the Governor be requested to sign the same, and that it be countersigned by the secretary and forth with transmitted to the said Count Rochambeau." Rochambeau's reply from Providence November 28 informs the Governor that "This state is the first we have been acquainted with, the friendly behavior of its inhabitants now, and at our arrival here, will give them always a right to our gratitude."[40]

On November 30, 1782, Rochambeau turned over the command to Baron de Viomenil and set out for Philadelphia, whence he embarked for France. The army broke camp on December, proceeded by divisions to Boston.

As the first sojourn of the French in Providence left its traces in claims presented to the town meeting, so this second visit likewise gave rise to claims which demanded the attention of the General Assembly. The claims of the owners of the camp ground and adjoining fields for wood and damage to property caused by the French troops amounting to over four thousand dollars were paid to Thomas Arnold but were considered exorbi-

[40] *R. I. Colonial Records*, Vol. IX, p. 617, 619-20.

tant. The services of Deputy Governor Bower were sought to bring the matter to the attention of the General Assembly. The result is shown in the following resolutions:

"Whereas the Honorable *Jabez Bowen Esq.* hath represented unto this Assembly that upon that the arrival of the Army of his Most Christian Majesty in the Town of Providence, and the Vicinity thereof, it became necessary for them to be hutted in the Woodland of *North Providence,* where a considerable Quantity of Wood was cut and Damages done unto the Lands: That upon the Moving of the said Army a Committee was appointed to estimate upon the Damages done unto the Proprietors of the said Land who reported the Sum of *Four Thousand six hundred Silver Dollars* as Damages which Sum the Intendant of the said Army and the Commissary of War conceived to be enormous and extravagant: And as the said Committee were obliged to make a precipitate Estimation without taking a sufficient View and it is indispensibly necessary that the strictest Justice be done unto the Army of our good Ally:

Wherefore *It is Voted and Resolved* That Messieurs Benjamin Whipple, jun. Edward Smith and Stephen Olney all of North Providence be and they are hereby appointed, authorized and required to go upon the Lands and Premises afore said and to take a strict view of the same and to make and estimate the real and just Damages done thereunto and to make Report unto the said *Jabez Bowen* as soon as they may be, what Sum ought in Justice and Good Conscience to be paid unto the Proprietors of the said Lands; which estimation shall be binding upon the said Proprietors.

And *it is further Voted and Resolved* That the Whole of the Monies now paid into the Hands of *Thomas Arnold* Esq; by the Treasurer of the said Army be and remain therein until the Report of the said Committee be made: That the said *Jabez Bowen* be and he is hereby directed to order the said Money to be paid agreeable to the Report of the said Committee; and that

the Overplus if any there be be paid to the said Commissary at War."[41]

The Barracks and Huts were apparently sold December 31, 1782, and the account shows that 266 huts were sold at prices ranging from 6 to 9 shillings, amounting to two hundred and ninety and one-third dollars. The whole number of barracks is stated as 325.[42]

The Committee's report is embodied in the following resolution:

Whereas Messieurs *Edward Smith, Stephen Olney* and Benjamin Whipple, jun. were by this Assembly appointed a Committee to View and estimate the Damages done by the *French* Army in the Vicinity of their Encampment in *North Providence* and to value the Wood cut and used by them: And they having performed said Service, reported thereon that the following Sums ought to be paid to the Proprietors for the Damages they have actually sustained: That the Wood and Timber of which the Huts are composed of be considered as the property of his Most Christian Majesty: That the Trees and other Timber and Wood which remain within the Surveys be considered as the Property of said Proprietors in Balance as a Compensation for that which was cut without said Surveys; and that there be paid

	Dollars
To Jeremiah Dexter for 699 Cords of Wood cut of 23 Acres 1 Rod and 14 Poles of Land at 2 Dollars per cord	1398
Damages done Fences &c	48½
	1446½
To Joseph Dexters Heirs for 953½ Cords of Wood cut off 31 Acres 3 Rods and 9 Poles of Land at 2 Dollars per Cord	1907
Damages done Fences &c	140⅓
	2047⅓

[41] *R. I. Acts and Resolves, November Session, 1782,* p. 24, also *R. I. Colonial Records,* Vol. IX, p. 627.

[42] *Reports, 1778-1788,* p. 42, R. I. State Archives.

To Thomas Arnold for 24¼ Cords of Wood at 2 Dollars per Cord Fences destroyed &c	70
To Jeremiah Sayles for 4 Cords of Wood at 2 Dollars per Cord, Fences destroyed &c	43⅔
To Peter Randall for Fence &c destroyed	10
To Marcy Dexter for Fence &c destroyed	10
Dollars	3627½

Cost of the Committee *Ten Dollars* received of Jabez Bowen Esq by *Stephen Olney*

Edward Smith
Stephen Olney
Benjamin Whipple, jun.

North Providence December 23, 1782

Which being duly considered *It is Voted and Resolved* That the said Report be accepted: That the Sum of One Thousand and Three Dollars Three-Quarters of a Dollar being the Sum which the Proprietors of said Woodland have received more than the amount of the Damages done them according to said Report be paid by the Persons who have received the same to the Honorable Jabez Bowen, Esq., and that after deducting the Expences of taking the said Estimate of Damages the said Jabez Bowen pay the Remainder to the Order of the Commissary at War of the French Army."[43]

This passed the Lower House March 1, 1782, and was concurred in by the Upper House March 4.[44]

The Squadron with the French troops sailed from Boston December 24 for Posto Cabello, Province of Caraccas, arriving there February 10, 1783. The news of peace between France and Great Britain reached them March 24 when they sailed for France, stopping at San Domingo and reaching the harbor of Brest June 17, 1783, whence they had sailed over three years earlier.

[43] *R. I. Acts and Resolves,* February Session, 1783, p. 27-28.

[44] *Reports, 1778-1788,* p. 43, R. I. State Archives.

The Capture of His Majesty's Ship Syren

By William Davis Miller.

During a gale on the morning of November 6, 1777, the British frigate *Syren,* sailing in company with ship *Sisters* and the tender *Two Mates,* was driven ashore near Point Judith and was captured by the battery of artillery stationed[1] at that place assisted by members of the Second Regiment of the Kings County Militia under Col. Charles Dyre. The *Sisters* and the *Two Mates* shared a like fate although it appears that the *Sisters* had been floated prior to her capture.

The *Syren* was a frigate of twenty-eight guns and was manned by a crew of one hundred and sixty-six officers and men,[2] her captain being Tobias Furneaux. No reference can be found to the details of the two other vessels.

The following depositions,[3] made by men called up shortly after the ships went aground, give an interesting account of the incident:

"Edward Lock of South Kingston Declareth, that on the sixth day of November A. D. 1777 in the Morning of said day I marched Compleat in my Arms to Point Judith Point, where lay Two Ships aground & a Schooner a float, & after a Smart Ingagement I with others took said Schooner, some time after that ye same day I saw at sd Point John Pain Peckham & Martin Murphy, sd. Jo. Pain with a Gun in his hand, we remained there

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[1] *History of the State of Rhode Island,* Arnold, Vol. II, p. 409.

[2] Idem.

[3] Originals from the papers of late Elisha R. Potter of Kingston and now in the possession of W. D. Miller.

Route of March of the French Troops from Providence to Waterman's Tavern. (*Rochambeau Papers, Library of Congress*)

Hut Cellars at French Camp 1782

with others 'til some time in ye evening of the same day 'til Col. Charles Dyer appear'd thare & soon after he came Col Sands and Capt Saml Potter told us as we and our Guns were wet we had better go from sd Point & dry ourselves & guns & refresh ourselves & return as soon as we Could Conveniently—agreeable to said directions we left sd Point dry'd ourselves & Guns & refreshed ourselves & myself & sd Jn. Pain Peckham, return'd to sd Point early next morning with our Guns & I saw sd Martin Murphy at said Point sd Morning, & then we all went to work in helping ye prisoners on shore & in unlading sd ships & worked there several days.

Edward Lock."

"Martin Murphy of South KingsTown, Declares, That on the sixth day of November A. D. 1777 I was Alarmed by Notice sent me & others, by Josephus Peckham (as I was informed) that there was that day two Ships & a Schooner aground at Point Judith Point in sd South Kingstown belonging to the Enemy, I then Marched compleat in my Arms to sd Point & got there just after said Schooner was taken I then saw there Thomas Steadman, William Steadman, James Steadman, Edward Lock & John Pain Peckham each of them had a Fire Arm in their Hands, I remained at sd Point with them and others, 'til some time in the evening of the same day 'til Col Charles Dyre appeared there—soon after Col Dyre appeared, he & Col Sands, said as we & our Guns were wet, we had better go from thence & dry ourselves and Guns & come there again next Morning in obedience to sd directions I then went from thence with sd John Pain Peckham, Edward Lock and others & dryed myself & Gun & according to order returned to sd Point early next Morning also appeared there early the same Morning sd John Pain Peckham & sd Edward we had each of us a Fire Arm with us & then we all went to work in assisting to unload sd ships & worked there several days, I saw Benjamin Peckham at sd Point the sd sixth day of November & several days afterward. The Deponent futher saith that on sd sixth day of Nov^{r} I saw at sd point Jacob & Pharoah two Negro men belonging

to Carder Hazard of said Town Esq[r] & the next day saw at sd Point sd Jacob & Pharaoh & another Negro man called Quaco belonging to sd Carder Hazard & see them all that day & several days afterwards at work there in helping to unload sd ships.

Martin Murphy."

These depositions are both undated but, as one is endorsed "Martin Murphy's Evidence," they probably related to one of the several actions resulting from the capture; one being a libel[4] on behalf of the captors (Dyre, Sands, etc., of the Second Regiment of the Kings County Militia).

The landing of the prisoners was completed without interruption and they were sent to Providence under escort, a small number being later transferred to Newport for exchange.[5] On December 26, 1777, Captain Furneaux was granted a parole and was ordered sent to the house of Peleg Arnold in Smithfield but this order was later changed and he was sent to the house of Daniel Mowrey in the same town. He was allowed a radius of five miles so that his parole was little more than a lenient imprisonment.[6]

The unloading of the supplies and gear took a longer time and in the meantime, word having been received by the British, four ships had been despatched from Newport. Upon their arrival several boats were put off containing a demolition party. This party were successful in laying and firing charges on board the *Syren*. A passage from the Journal of Bartholomew James—later Rear Admiral—gives the following account of this action:[7]

"On the following day I brought her (the tender 'Lady Parker') out of the harbour (Newport), and was directed to proceed to sea in her company with his Majesty's ships Flora,

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[4]*Providence Gazette,* November 15, 1777. Case was to be tried first Monday in December in South Kingstown.

[5]Letter from Pelham Winslow to Edward Winslow, Jr., *Mass. Hist. Coll.,* Second Series, Vol. II, p. 237.

[6]Original in the R. I. H. S. M., Vol. XIII, p. 27.

[7]*The Journal of Rear-Admiral Bartholomew James* (1752-1828), London, Navy Records Society, 1896.

Lark and Pigot tender, and go to the assistance of the Syren frigate, who, with a transport, had run on shore on Point Judith, and whose people were made prisoners by the rebels.

"At ten o'clock in the night the two frigates anchored about two miles off the shore, and the rebels commenced a fire on us from three eighteen pounders. Four boats were then manned and equipped with combustibles, under the first lieutenant of the Chatham, who was sent to command the second boat, the second lieutenant of the Lark the third, and myself the fourth. We left the ships at eleven o'clock and rowed towards the Syren, amidst a heavy fire from the enemy of cannon and musketry, and found a heavy sea running alongside of her, that her masts were made a stage to walk from the ship on shore, and that they had got out a quantity of her stores and provisions. In this situation we boarded her, and each of the officers, as directed by the admiral, carried his basket of combustibles into the ship and fired her in different places; though our retreat was necessarily so precipitate, that we were obliged to get into the first boat we could find and put off with all speed, as the fire had communicated to her guns, which were then going off both sides; and we completely destroyed her without any accident, but that of the first lieutenant of the Flora, whose face and hands were much burnt by the explosion of the combustibles."

The confident statement made by James that the Syren was completely destroyed, would appear to be an exaggeration on his part. No record of such destruction can be found outside of the extract from his Journal as is here quoted. In the proceedings of the General Assembly, South Kingstown, March 9, 1778, in which the Syren was taxed £470 8s 9d to meet the bill of costs of the libel action in the maritime court, no reference is made of her having been completely destroyed.[8]

That it was a difficult matter to collect this tax, which was to be charged against the proceeds received by the captors from the sale of the ships and supplies, is evidenced by the consider-

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[8] *Records of the State of Rhode Island,* Bartlett, Vol. VIII, p. 373.

able number of resolves passed in the General Assembly,[9] many of the "purchasors" being successful in concealing their identity.

Among the numerous statements presented for payment against the captors, one is of special interest.[10] It is from Isaac Pearce for "carrying the Eighteen Pounder from Christopher Robinsons[11] to North Kingston." The distance was about ten miles and twenty-two oxen were used, probably in relays. The route was by Samuel Watson's.

This eighteen pounder was one of the three pieces originally allotted by the General Assembly to the battery at Point Judith, but later a further order replaced it at Wickford where it successfully defended the town.[12] It has been stated that this gun took part in the actual capture of the Syren.[13] This would appear doubtful; as allowing for the time required for the alarm to reach Wickford, the repair to the piece (made necessary by a Tory act) and the slow method of transportation, it is probable that it did not reach Point Judith until late in the day. It was, however, undoubtedly one of the three eighteen pounders that subjected James and his party to "a heavy fire."

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[9]Idem. Vol. VIII, pp. 400 and 455.

[10]From the original from the papers of the late E. R. Potter, Esq. of Kingston and now in possession of W. D. Miller. Another statement including items of 139 gallons of rum (for rations) from Col. John Waite, R.I.H.S.M., Vol. XIII, p. 48.

[11]Son of Gov. William Robinson. His farm was on Point Judith.

[12]*Revolutionary Defences in Rhode Island,* Field, pp. 119-120.

[13]Idem.

Rev. Samuel Niles evidence regarding the ministerial lands Kingston, R. I. 1739

The Deposition of Samuel Niles formerly of Kingston in the Colony of Rhod-Island and now of Braintree in the County of Suffolk in his Majesties province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England Clerk Testifyeth that in or about the year of our Lord 1702 He Came by the Invitation of Several well Disposed Gentlemen and other persons at the abovesd Kingston to preach the gospel among them and that Soon after his Entring up on the work of the Ministry there He was put into the possession of the Tract of Land known by the Name of the Ministerial land in Kingston. By Mr Thomas Mumford Deceased one of the Propriater of the Pettasquamscut purchase without any motion made to him by the Said Deponent which he did by the Advice of his partners in said purchase and on their behalf as well as his own (as He Enformed him then) As that which properly belonged to Him the Said Niles Since it had been laid out and Devoted by the proprieter abovesd to the Use of the Ministry in Said Kingston in the Presbiterian or Congregational way and as He was Now Come among them to preach the Gospel and was a professor of that way of worship for the Support of which it was designed the Improvement of the Said Ministerial Land properly belonged to him the Said Niles dureing his Continuance among them Therfore Soon after the Said Deponent Entered upon The Ministry there the Said Mr Mumford went with the Said Niles and Showed him the bounds of the Said Ministerial Lands on the East and on the South part which as he Said Consisted of Three hundred acres He also then pointed at the North Bounds which as he Said ran over the plaine to a Branch of the Cedar Swamp and to the great fresh pond in the west then known by the Name of Wordens pond. Some time after the Deponent was Informed that Mr Henry Gardner had fenced in a part of the Said Ministerial Land with his own adjoyning thereto in the North part on the before mentioned plaine which when the Deponent was Aprised of not

haveing a particular knowledge of the line on that part Told Mr Gardner that it was reported by Some that He had fenced of a part of the Ministerial Lands but He Said he had not fenced beyond his Line as he Supposed However He then promised if it was found to be So when the Line Came to be run and Settled He would throw it out of his Improvement and also Said He woud by no means Lessen the Interest of the Ministerial Lands The Deponent not distrusting His fidelity who always had been and Continued to be a Constant attender on his Ministry and promotor of the Gospel the whole time of the Deponents Continuance in Kingston The Said Mr Gardner haveing also ever treated him the Said Deponent with a becoming Civility did not proceed farther therein

And farther the Deponent Saith That altho The Reved Mr Bridge a Minister of the Church of England or Episcopal order preached for a Length of time in the abovesd Kingstown at the Same time that the Deponent preached there. Yet he Never heard that he knows of that Either Mr Bridge or any other person on his behalf or for the life of the Church of England made demand thereon or any part thereof and that the Deponent Improved the Said Lands freely without the least Molestation all the Inhabitants Joyntly Concuring therein as that which Answered its true and genuine designe of that Donation.

The Deponent also Saith that He moveing from Kingston Leased or let by a verbal agreement the Said Ministerial Lands to Edward Mott and James Bundy Both of Kingston aforesd Since Deceased as a Trustee to whome the Care of the abovesd Interest was Committed after which in the year 1714 the abovesd James Bundy became bound by a bond under his hand seale to Deliver a quiet and peaceable possession of the Said Tract of Land to the Said Deponent or to any other person or persons Intrusted with the Care and oversight of the Interest aboveSaid

The Deponent also testifyeth that The Honeable Judge Sewall Esqr The Honeable Jahleel Brenton Esqr the aforesd Mr Thomas Mumford Mr Benedict Arnold Capt Josias Arnold who were the Next Descendants of the first Worthy Donors (Several of

them of the beforesd Tract of Land and Most likely to know the Minds of their piously disposed predessors in the Donation by them Designed by whose order together with their Partners the Said Three hundred Acres of Land was lay^{d} out Each one of them told him Singly that the Said promises of Land were given and laid out for the life of the Ministry in Kingston According to the Presbyterian or Congregational perswasion or way of worship as practiced in the Churches of New England without any Relation therein had to the Church of England or any of the Episcopal order or perswasion The Deponent farther Saith that when the Said James Bundy was first settleing on the above mentioned Ministerial Land the above named M^{r} Thomas Mumford Directed him the Said Deponent To whose Care and Improvement the Land was Committed to acquaint the Said Bundy That Unless he promised to hold his possession there for and Under the presbyterian or Congregational right and for that life alone That He the said Deponent shoul^{d} forbid his proceeding thereon which He did accordingly and the Said Bundy then promised to do So And also Said that it was what He Expected and Intended for He always had heard the Land was given for that End and no other which M^{r} Mumford did (as he Said, for that the oversight of the Said Interest was Committed to him by his fellow propriater, He liveing in the Town and the Nearest to it

Newport Samuel Niles
April 2 1739 Sworn in Court 2nd April 1739
Testr Jas Martin Cler.

Thesd Samuel Niles being interogated upon oath in Court was asked whether he was an Ordained Minister during his Stay at Kingstown or before his Departure from thence Answered No.

Thes^{d} Samuel Niles further declers That James Bundy by his order during his Stay at Kingstown fenced in some part of the Land in Controversy

Niles Evidence about Ministerial Land
M^{r}. Sam^{l} Nile's Evid
XXV N^{o}. 20 -

Notes

By the bequest of the late Albert L. Calder, 2d, a former member, the Society is to receive one-eighth of the trust estate created by him and payable on the death of his wife and sister.

Mr. Lester W. Tucker of Rutherford, N. J., has presented the Society with some early deeds and indentures, which form a valuable addition to our historical and genealogical records. These documents which cover Northern Rhode Island will be helpful in research work.

Two portraits, the bequest of Miss Emily Bailey Perry, of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, have recently been received by the Society. The portrait of Miss Perry's father, Rev. Gideon Babcock Perry, D.D., LL.D., was painted by Mr. John Pope of New York City in 1859. The Rev. Dr. Perry was born in the old Perry homestead in South Kingston, R. I., October 12, 1800, in the same room in which Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry and Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry were born. The other portrait is of Miss Perry's mother, Abby Brown Stewart Perry.

The Society has also received a gift from Mr. Edward M. Harris of two portraits in oil, one of Benjamin Eddy, the other of Mrs. Benjamin Eddy (Sarah James).

Miss Emily S. White presented the Society with some miscellaneous pamphlets, which help to complete our files.

Miss Louisa A. Sweetland has made the Society a present of a picture of the famous Sprague's string-team.

Mr. Clovis H. Bowen of Pawtucket, R. I., Mr. Henry Buker of Providence, and Mr. Ralph C. Estes of Attleboro, Mass., have been elected to membership in the Society.

Dr. George T. Spicer has presented the Society with a copy of "A Supplement to the Descendants of Peter Spicer," containing "Additions and Corrections."